

THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE
EASTERN DIVISION

LEONARD QUINN,

Plaintiff,

vs.

No.: 1:15-cv-01104-JDT-egb

UNION CITY GROUP HOME AT
GENERATIONS,

Defendant.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

On May 4, 2015, Plaintiff Leonard Quinn, a *pro se* litigant who at the time was a patient at the Western Mental Health Institute¹, filed a 42 USC § 1983 complaint against the Union City Group Home at Generations.

This case has been referred to the United States Magistrate Judge for management and for all pretrial matters for determination and/or report and recommendation as appropriate. (Admin. Order 2013-05, April 29, 2013.)

The Court is required to screen in forma pauperis complaints and to dismiss any complaint, or any portion thereof, if the action—

- (i) is frivolous or malicious;
- (ii) fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted; or

¹ On February 8, 2016, the Plaintiff notified the Court of a change of address.

(iii) seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief.
28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2).

In assessing whether the complaint in this case states a claim on which relief may be granted, the standards under Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6), as stated in Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 667-79, 129 S. Ct. 1937, 1949-50, 173 L. Ed. 2d 868 (2009), and in Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555-57, 127 S. Ct. 1955, 1964-66, 167 L. Ed. 2d 929 (2007), are applied. Hill v. Lappin, 630 F.3d 468, 470-71 (6th Cir. 2010). "Accepting all well-pleaded allegations in the complaint as true, the Court 'consider[s] the factual allegations in [the] complaint to determine if they plausibly suggest an entitlement to relief.'" Williams v. Curtin, 631 F.3d 380, 383 (6th Cir. 2011) (quoting Iqbal, 556 U.S. at 681, 129 S. Ct. at 1951) (alteration in original). "[P]leadings that . . . are no more than conclusions are not entitled to the assumption of truth. While legal conclusions can provide the framework of a complaint, they must be supported by factual allegations." Iqbal, 556 U.S. at 681, 129 S. Ct. at 1950; see also Twombly, 550 U.S. at 555 n.3, 127 S. Ct. at 1964-65 n.3 ("Rule 8(a)(2) still requires a 'showing,' rather than a blanket assertion, of entitlement to relief. Without some factual allegation in the complaint, it is hard to see how a claimant could satisfy the requirement of providing not only 'fair notice'

of the nature of the claim, but also 'grounds' on which the claim rests.").

"A complaint can be frivolous either factually or legally. See Neitzke [v. Williams], 490 U.S. [319,] 325, 109 S. Ct. at 1827 [(1989)]. Any complaint that is legally frivolous would ipso facto fail to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. See *id.* at 328-29, 109 S. Ct. 1827." Hill, 630 F.3d at 470.

Whether a complaint is factually frivolous under §§ 1915A(b)(1) and 1915(e)(2)(B)(i) is a separate issue from whether it fails to state a claim for relief. Statutes allowing a complaint to be dismissed as frivolous give "judges not only the authority to dismiss a claim based on an indisputably meritless legal theory, but also the unusual power to pierce the veil of the complaint's factual allegations and dismiss those claims whose factual contentions are clearly baseless." Neitzke, 490 U.S. at 327, 109 S. Ct. 1827 (interpreting 28 U.S.C. § 1915). Unlike a dismissal for failure to state a claim, where a judge must accept all factual allegations as true, Iqbal, 129 S. Ct. at 1949-50, a judge does not have to accept "fantastic or delusional" factual allegations as true in prisoner complaints that are reviewed for frivolousness. Neitzke, 490 U.S. at 327-28, 109 S. Ct. 1827. *Id.* at 471.

"Pro se complaints are to be held 'to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers,' and should

therefore be liberally construed." Williams, 631 F.3d at 383 (quoting Martin v. Overton, 391 F.3d 710, 712 (6th Cir. 2004)). Pro se litigants, however, are not exempt from the requirements of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Wells v. Brown, 891 F.2d 591, 594 (6th Cir. 1989), *reh'g denied* (Jan. 19, 1990); *see also* Song v. Gipson, No. 09-5480, 2011 WL 1827441, at *4 (6th Cir. May 12, 2011); Brown v. Matauszak, No. 09-2259, 2011 WL 285251, at *5 (6th Cir. Jan. 31, 2011) (affirming dismissal of pro se complaint for failure to comply with "unique pleading requirements" and stating "a court cannot 'create a claim which [a plaintiff] has not spelled out in his pleading'" (quoting Clark v. Nat'l Travelers Life Ins. Co., 518 F.2d 1167, 1169 (6th Cir. 1975)) (alteration in original); Payne v. Secretary of Treas., 73 F. App'x 836, 837 (6th Cir. 2003) (affirming sua sponte dismissal of complaint pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a)(2) and stating, "[n]either this court nor the district court is required to create Payne's claim for her"); *cf.* Pliler v. Ford, 542 U.S. 225, 231, 124 S. Ct. 2441, 2446, 159 L. Ed. 2d 338 (2004) ("District judges have no obligation to act as counsel or paralegal to pro se litigants.").

ANALYSIS

Plaintiff would like "to be compensated," but does not state how much. The Court cannot determine what the actual grievance the

Plaintiff has, beyond general displeasure at the living conditions at Union City.

Additionally, any relief which could have been granted in relation the conditions at the Group Home are moot, since the Plaintiff is no longer a patient there. "A federal court has no authority to render a decision upon moot questions or to declare rules of law that cannot affect the matter at issue." Cleveland Branch, N.A.A.C.P. v. City of Parma, Ohio, 263 F.3d 513, 530 (6th Cir. 2001). "[A] case is moot when the issues presented are no longer 'live' or the parties lack a legally cognizable interest in the outcome." Los Angeles County v. Davis, 440 U.S. 625, 631, 99 S. Ct. 1379, 59 L. Ed. 2d 642 (1979). This occurs when "(1) it can be said with assurance that there is no reasonable expectation . . . that the alleged violation will recur," and "(2) interim relief or events have completely and irrevocably eradicated the effects of the alleged violation." Id. "When both conditions are satisfied it may be said that the case is moot because neither party has a legally cognizable interest in the final determination of the underlying questions of fact and law." Id.

Plaintiff's transfer from the Union City Group Home at Generations has "eradicated the effects of the alleged violation." Id. Once transferred, Plaintiff was no longer subject to the Home's policies. Furthermore, there is no reasonable expectation that the alleged violation(s) will recur. Under these

circumstances, there is no basis for the court to provide plaintiff with injunctive relief. See Kensu v. Haigh, 87 F.3d 172, 175 (6th Cir. 1996) (prisoner's claims for injunctive relief related to his conditions of confinement were moot when he was no longer confined to the institution that searched his mail); Penland v. Warren County Jail, 759 F.2d 524, 526 n. 1 (6th Cir. 1985) (when plaintiffs sought injunctive relief related to their confinement at a county jail, their release from the jail rendered their claims for injunctive relief moot); J.P. v. Taft, 439 F.Supp.2d 793, 813 (S.D. Ohio 2006) (released inmate cannot be awarded injunctive relief related to his conditions of confinement; a former inmate's claims are moot "[b]ecause he cannot establish that there is a reasonable likelihood that the allegedly wrongful acts will recur as to him"). Accordingly, any of the Plaintiff's claims which could be construed as injunctive relief should be dismissed as moot.

Ultimately, Plaintiff does not state a claim upon which relief can be granted under 42 USC § 1983.

For the reasons above, it is recommended that the complaint be dismissed *sua sponte* for lack of subject-matter jurisdiction, pursuant to Rules 12(b)(1) and (b)(6) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

Respectfully submitted this, the 9th day of March, 2016.

s/Edward G. Bryant
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

ANY OBJECTIONS OR EXCEPTIONS TO THIS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION MUST BE FILED WITHIN FOURTEEN (14) DAYS AFTER BEING SERVED WITH A COPY OF THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1). FAILURE TO FILE THEM WITHIN FOURTEEN (14) DAYS MAY CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF OBJECTIONS, EXCEPTIONS, AND ANY FURTHER APPEAL.